

The proposed sale of this equipment and support does not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor is the Sierra Nevada Corporation, headquartered in Centennial, Colorado. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Nigeria for mobile training teams and contract logistic support.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-55

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. This sale involves the release of sensitive weapons software technology information to Nigeria. Software associated with the following weapons will be included in the aircraft operational flight program to support a future weapons capability.

2. Sensitive and/or classified (up to SECRET) elements of the proposed A-29 sale to Nigeria includes the hardware and associated software with: Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) laser guided rockets, Guided Bomb Unit (GBU)-12/58 Paveway II laser guided tail kits, and Mark (MK)-81/82 general purpose bombs.

3. The Hydra 70 Rocket System is a modernized version of the 2.75 inch (70 mm) unguided rocket body with the MK66 Rocket Motor.

4. The APKWS is a low cost semi-active laser guidance kit developed by BAE Systems which is added to current unguided 70 mm rocket motors and warheads similar to and including the Hydra 70 rocket. It is a low collateral damage weapon that can effectively strike both soft and lightly armored targets. APKWS turns a standard unguided 2.75 inch (70 mm) rocket into a precision laser-guided rocket, classification up to SECRET.

5. GBU-12/58 Paveway II (PW-II) Tailkits: 500-lb (GBU-12) and 250-lb (GBU-58) are laser-guided ballistic bombs (LGBs) developed by Raytheon and Lockheed Martin. The LGB is a maneuverable, free-fall weapon that guides to a spot of laser energy reflected off of the target. The LGB is delivered like a normal general purpose (GP) warhead and the semi-active guidance corrects for many of the normal errors inherent in any delivery system. Laser designation for the weapon can be provided by a variety of laser target markers or designators. The tailkit consists of a laser guidance kit, a computer control group (CCG) and a warhead specific Air Foil Group (AFG), that attach to the nose and tail of MK 81 and MK 82 General Purpose (GP) bomb bodies to create an LGB. This sale includes the tailkits to transform Nigeria's existing 500-lb and 250-lb GP bomb bodies into GBU-12s and GBU-58s respectively. Nigeria is also buying additional GBU-58s, 250-lb (MK-81) guided bombs. The overall weapon is CONFIDENTIAL.

6. AN/AAQ-22F Brite Star Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) Multi-Sensor Targeting System developed by FLIR. The system is a five field-of-view (FOV) large format thermal imager, three FOV color daylight camera with laser designator for terminal guidance of LGBs and IR-guided rockets. The system is classified as UNCLASSIFIED.

7. This sale is necessary in furtherance of U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification. Moreover, the benefits to be derived from

this sale, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology were revealed to unauthorized persons.

8. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Nigeria.

CONFIRMATION OF CHRISTOPHER WRAY

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I wish to voice my support for Christopher Wray's confirmation to be the next Director of the FBI. After meeting with Mr. Wray and reviewing his record, I believe he possesses the independence and integrity necessary to lead the Bureau through this tumultuous period.

This vacancy arose because President Trump abruptly fired then-Director James Comey. The circumstances surrounding Mr. Comey's firing are alarming and suspicious. Mr. Comey testified under oath that the President not only demanded his personal loyalty on numerous occasions but also intimidated that Mr. Comey should stop investigating then-National Security Advisor Michael Flynn and Russian interference in the 2016 elections.

Mr. Wray will face numerous challenges as the new Director of the FBI. He will have to deal with a President who has shown a complete disregard for traditional protocols designed to ensure the agency's independence. During our meeting, Mr. Wray assured me that he would remain independent from the President and would reject any attempts by President Trump to inappropriately intervene in the work of the FBI.

During our meeting, I also impressed upon Mr. Wray the importance of consolidating the FBI's staff in one building. The FBI has long outgrown its current space and the building is deteriorating, which compromises the agency's mission. I look forward to working with him to give FBI personnel the facilities they deserve.

As Mr. Wray takes his position, he will need to work immediately to affirm the FBI's independence and restore the confidence of an agency shaken by the President's inappropriate conduct with respect to Mr. Comey and other matters. This Congress must conduct vigorous oversight to ensure that Mr. Wray maintains the high standard of integrity that he has promised and to respond to any attempts by the President or his political advisors to exert undue influence at the FBI. I pledge to do everything I can to support his important mission and the vital work of the FBI.

U.S.-CUBA TRADE ACT OF 2017

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to propose a new day in U.S. relations with the country of Cuba. With his recent imposition of new restrictions, the President presented one vision of that relationship—one that

looks backwards and reverts to a failed policy of isolation that has done nothing to improve the lives of the Cuban people and has harmed the American economy. I would like to present an alternative vision—one that looks to the future and at fostering the exchange of ideas and commerce between the two countries.

It is often noted that Cuba is less than 100 miles away, but decades behind the United States, in no small part because of the U.S. embargo. Decades of the same, tired, failing economic policies left the Cuban Government in place and only hurt the Cuban people and American farmers and manufacturers.

As Cuban-American relations thawed under Presidents Bush and Obama, the Cuban Government decided to try something different. Private entrepreneurs are operating an increasing number of restaurants, taxis, and other tourist-related businesses. Cubans are opening up their homes for visitors to stay in and selling products directly to visiting Americans. In addition, the government's grip on information and communication is necessarily weakening as technology and the Internet inevitably permeate the country.

The U.S. has come a long way since the 1990s and hardly resembles the world of the 1960s. Our policies toward Cuba should reflect that change. The U.S.-Cuba Trade Act of 2017 would completely remove the architecture of sanctions against Cuba and establish normal trade relations with that country.

I want to be clear that this is not a free pass for the Cuban Government. I continue to have grave concerns about its suppression of pro-democracy movements, but I reject the view that continuing to try and ostracize Cuba will bring positive change. The past five decades provide empirical evidence that it will not. I also reject the cynical argument that the U.S. must choose between engagement with Cuba and support for basic human rights and dignity. Indeed, if the past half century has shown us anything, it is that smart, principled engagement is the way to bring about greater economic and political freedom for the Cuban people.

Just as important as what the embargo means for the Cuban people is what it means for U.S. farmers and businesses. Even with the changes made by the Obama administration, it remains almost impossible to do business in Cuba. Cuba is a natural customer of the United States, but restrictions on credit and travel, among others, have severely hampered the ability of U.S. exporters to do business in the Cuban market. The question is: What are we getting by surrendering a market that should be ours to the EU, China, Brazil, and others? I am afraid that the answer is nothing.

That is why I introduced the U.S.-Cuba Trade Act of 2017, to finally put an end to the ineffective embargo against Cuba.

HONORING CORPSMAN FIRST CLASS RYAN LOHREY

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and sacrifice of U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman First Class Ryan Lohrey of Middletown, IN. Dedication to his country, loyalty to his fellow servicemembers, and a deep love for his family were the qualities that defined Ryan's life.

A native of Middletown, IN, Ryan graduated from Shenandoah High School in 2005. Two years after graduation, he joined the U.S. Navy, where he served our country as a special amphibious reconnaissance corpsman, providing medical care to his fellow servicemembers.

On Monday, July 10, 2017, Ryan and 15 other servicemembers died tragically when the KC-130 aircraft they were on crashed in Mississippi. The plane was carrying servicemembers from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 452 and the 2d Marine Raider Battalion, a special operations unit. Hundreds gathered on July 27 as a military procession honored Ryan from Indianapolis International Airport to New Castle, IN. He received military honors during his funeral in Middletown on July 31, 2017.

Ryan is remembered for his selfless sacrifice, humility, patience, and infectious smile. He distinguished himself through his service in the U.S. Navy, where he deployed with the 2d Marine Reconnaissance Battalion and later with the 2d Marine Raider Battalion. He was a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq. Ryan had qualification as an enlisted fleet marine force warfare specialist, marine combatant diver, and Navy and Marine Corps parachutist. He rose to become a special amphibious reconnaissance corpsman. For his service, among the awards he earned were a Purple Heart, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon with Gold Star in lieu of second award, and Good Conduct Medal with two Bronze Stars in lieu of second and third award.

Ryan was a devoted patriot, son, husband, and father, who loved football and making others laugh. He is survived and will be deeply missed by his wife, Cassie; his two children, Gavin and Maelyn; his parents, Michael and Teresa Lohrey of Middletown; and his grandparents, Barbara Lohrey of Middletown, and George Lohrey, of Sulphur Springs; as well as friends, the U.S. Navy family, and Hoosiers across the State of Indiana.

As Ryan's grandmother said, "Ryan was my hero. He's everybody's hero." Ryan set an example for others and will be remembered for his strong character. Let us always remember and emulate the shining example this brave man set for us and honor his commitment to serving his fellow citizens. May God welcome Ryan home and give comfort to his family and friends.

HONORING LIEUTENANT AARON ALLAN

Mr. DONNELLY. Today I wish to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and sacrifice of Lt. Aaron Allan of the Southport Police Department. Dedication, loyalty, and compassion for those in need were the qualities that defined Lt. Allan's life.

Lt. Aaron Allan was a 6-year veteran with the Southport Police Department, who began his career in law enforcement in 2001. A kind and caring person, Lt. Allan was a family man who devoted his life to serving his community. Lt. Allan earned the nickname "Teddy Bear" because of his kind heart and willingness to help anyone in need.

Lt. Allan had dreamed of being a police officer since he was 5 years old. Before he joined the Southport Police Department in 2011 as a volunteer officer, he previously worked as an officer at the Indiana School for the Deaf and for Franklin Township Schools. In 2015, he was named Southport Police Department's "Officer of the Year," after saving two lives. Among his efforts, he performed CPR to save a man at the Indiana State Fairgrounds before backup officers arrived with a defibrillator. In recognition of his work, he became the only full-time paid officer in an all-volunteer force of reserve officers. He was a devout volunteer, leader, and role model in Southport, who believed in community policing and prided himself on stopping to talk with residents and getting to know them. Lt. Allan made a difference in the community and always put the safety and well-being of his fellow citizens first. When he encountered a family whose car would not start and the husband had been diagnosed with a brain tumor and the wife cared for her husband and young daughter, Allan went to an auto parts store and bought the family a new car battery with his own money. It went beyond that. He participated in "Shop with a Deputy," volunteering to take underprivileged children Christmas shopping. He also excelled responding to difficult calls, whether a citizen had overdosed and needed Narcan or he encountered a drunk driver. He enriched and touched so many lives through his service, and he made the ultimate sacrifice while responding to fellow citizens in need.

On Thursday, July 27, 2017, Lt. Allan was doing his job, responding to an incident involving an overturned vehicle in Southport, when he was shot. Hours before Lt. Allan was killed, he walked his 5-year-old son, Aaron, Jr., to the bus for his first day of kindergarten. He put his life on the line so that Hoosiers could have the chance to live in peace and safety, and we are eternally grateful. He died doing what he loved, and his legacy will live on.

Lt. Allan was a devoted citizen, son, husband, father, and friend, who loved his children and his fellow brothers and sisters in blue. He loved his job as a Southport Police Officer, and no amount of gratitude can repay Lt. Allan or his loved ones for his sacrifice.

Lt. Allan is survived and deeply missed by his wife, Stacy, their two sons, his fellow officers in Southport, and citizens across Indiana. Let us strive to remember and emulate the shining example Lt. Allan set for us, and honor his selfless commitment to serving his fellow citizens. May God welcome Lt. Allan home and give comfort to his family and friends.

VENEZUELA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a statement by Julio Andres Borges Junyent, President of the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA—IN RESCUE OF THE CONSTITUTION, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS: AGREEMENT IN DISREGARD OF THE FRAUDULENT'S ELECTORAL RESULTS ON JULY 30TH, 2017 FOR WHICH WAS INTENDED TO IMPOSE AN ILLEGITIMATE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, AND IN CLAIM OF THE 1999 CONSTITUTION AS A DEMOCRATIC BASIS OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

CONSIDERING

On July 30th, 2017 the regime of Nicolas Maduro, with the support of the majority of rectors of the National Electoral Council, judges of the Supreme Court of Justice and the high dome of the National Bolivarian Armed Forces, advanced on the fraudulent constituent process that initiated on May 1, 2017, realizing a supposed illegitimate "election" of such illegitimate constituent members;

CONSIDERING

The authorities of the National Bolivarian Armed Forces have assumed the prominence in the announcements concerning the electoral process, investing the constitutional principle of subjection of the military civil authorities; which is a sample of the militarism they intend to impose, in contravention to the enshrined civic and republican values on the current Constitution of 1999;

CONSIDERING

That this National Assembly has pointed out in various agreements, and it was ratified by the Venezuelan people in the referendum of July 16th, 2017, the National Constituent Assembly is a fraudulent and illegitimate process that only seeks to repeal the Constitution of 1999 by other mechanisms than those provided, in order to establish in Venezuela a dictatorship of totalitarian Court, in reason of which all acts and processes arising from such constituent must be unknown to citizens and government employees, who have the duty to restore the validity of the 1999 Constitution, all this, in accordance with the articles 333 and 350;

CONSIDERING

The fraudulent election of July 30th sought to give legitimacy to the constitutional process, despite the fact that such procedure was initiated with the usurpation of the popular sovereignty, which was never consulted about the convocation of the constituent Assembly, as ordered by the constitutional article 347;

CONSIDERING

In addition, the fraudulent election of July 30th was held on the sidelines of international guarantees and constitutional minimum that must be presented in any democratic election, which shows the high despite